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Illinois
Environmental
Protection Agency

Bureau of Land - Solid Waste Management Section
1021 North Grand Ave. East
P.O. Box 19276
Springfield, IL 62794-9276

June 2001

Guide to Household Recycling

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Recycling has been part of America's lifestyle from colonial times to World War II and will play an important role in our future. During World War II, saving tin cans and grease drippings was considered critical to the war effort. Children went door-to-door to collect paper, aluminum, and other recyclables. It was not until the birth of the disposable society in the 1950's that it became acceptable to throw away rather than recover resources.

Some world resources are in danger of being exhausted and consumption of these resources continues to increase at an alarming rate.

Unfortunately, increased consumption means increased waste. We should look for alternatives to the amount of solid waste disposed at the curb.

Recycling is practical and simple. We will always need landfills, because some wastes cannot be recycled. Recycling is one big step forward.

WHY RECYCLE?

Recycling reduces the need for landfill space.

Every American discards about six pounds of solid waste each day. A family of four can expect to discard more than three tons of trash each year.

Recycling conserves energy. Almost 66,000 kilowatt hours of electricity are needed to make one ton of aluminum from bauxite. One ton of aluminum recovered from recycled materials requires less than 6,000 kilowatt hours. That's a savings of 92 percent. Recycling other household waste such as paper, steel cans and glass results in comparable energy savings.

Recycling saves natural resources. The world's supply of fossil fuels and mineral deposits is being rapidly depleted. Using recycled materials will slow the depletion of existing resources and decrease our dependence on foreign sources for petroleum and other materials.

Recycling protects our environment.

Recycling one ton of paper saves 17 trees. Many industries producing products from recycled materials cause less air and water pollution than industries producing the same product from raw materials.

Recycling helps solve solid waste issues.

About 80 percent of the solid waste generated each year still ends up in landfills. While recycling will not eliminate the use of landfills, it does divert material from disposal, thereby increasing the landfill space.

WHAT CAN BE RECYCLED?

Glass containers may be recycled in your area. Fluorescent light bulbs may also be recycled. Milk-white, plate glass, light bulbs and crystal cannot be recycled. Glass for recycling should be clean, metal caps and rings removed and separated by color.

Paper is classified into various grades.

Newspapers (ONP), which are not bound by a glued edge, can be recycled. Newsprint often accounts for the largest part of waste from a household. It is also the easiest to recycle. It merely needs to be stacked in manageable bundles.

Cardboard (OCC) - corrugated cardboard, commonly used for heavy-duty cartons, has two layers of heavy cardboard with a ribbed section in between. Individuals cannot recycle plastic coated or tar-lined corrugated cardboard. To recycle cardboard, break the box down so that it is flat.

Kraft Paper is the brown paper used in grocery sacks and wrapping paper. It is often recycled with corrugated cardboard.

Hi-grade Paper: Hi-grade paper is shredded, repulped, de-inked and then recycled into bond paper, tissues, and wrapping paper. Purchase recycled paper whenever possible because it helps to increase the demand for recycled products.

Mixed Paper is composed of all types of paper mixed together in some way. Most of this paper is found in packaging. Check with your local recycling center to determine amount of separation to be done.

Metals can also be recycled.

Aluminum beverage cans and other clean household aluminum products can be recycled. It takes about 25 cans to make one pound of aluminum. To recycle aluminum cans, rinse and flatten the cans.



Other aluminum items such as foil plates, aluminum foil, and lawn furniture are recyclable. Aluminum can be recycled into new beverage containers, storm doors, gutters and a variety of other products.

Steel Cans are magnetic and have seamed sides. The typical food can is a good example. For recycling, these cans should be rinsed, end labels removed and flattened.



Other Metals, such as pipe, appliances, and sheet metal can be recycled.

Copper wiring and *lead-acid* batteries are also recyclable at scrap metal dealers.

Plastics (HDPE, PET)

Plastic soft drink containers and milk jugs are recyclable. Rinse and remove metal caps. Recycled plastic is used to make floor mats, fishing line, fiber filler for sleeping bags and vests and plastic lumber.

Motor Oil

If you change the oil in your car yourself, save the used oil in a leakproof container. Some service stations and recycling centers accept used oil. Make arrangements for properly disposing of motor oil before changing it. The oil is then shipped to a refinery where the impurities are removed. It is marketed as re-refined oil or an industrial fuel oil. For more information see the brochure "Household Guide to Automotive and Small Engine Product Disposal" published by Illinois EPA.

Organic Wastes

Kitchen wastes and lawn trimmings can be used to enrich soil through composting. Composting is a controlled decaying process but must be properly maintained. To receive more information about composting, contact the Department of Commerce and Community Affairs (DCCA) at 800-252-8955 to get their brochure called "A Homeowners Guide to Recycling Yard Waste."



HOW TO RECYCLE AT HOME

Separating materials in the home is the best way to make recycling work. Once materials are put in the garbage they are more difficult to collect.

Some studies indicate it takes less than three minutes a day for a homeowner to recycle glass, cans, aluminum and newspaper.

Your home recycling center can be set up in a garage, closet, or kitchen corner. The materials required include, boxes, grocery bags and a can opener.

A home recycling center can be set up with just three sturdy boxes: one each paper, cans, and glass.

Most people find a monthly trip to the collection center convenient. It takes very little time and can be combined with other trips. Your community may have a curbside pickup which you can participate in or help your local government to start.

There are many recycling operations in Illinois that buy various recycled materials. Check the local Yellow Pages under "recycling," "waste paper," or "scrap metals" to find a recycler in your area, or to get the name of your local recycling solid waste coordinator contact:

Illinois Protection Agency
Solid Waste Management Section
1021 North Grand Ave. East, P.O. Box 19276
Springfield, IL 62794-9276
(217) 785-8604 TDD (217) 782-9143
www.epa.state.il.us

For a copy of the recycling publications brochure contact Solid Waste Clearinghouse at (800) 252-8955.

Dept. of Commerce and Community Affairs (DCCA)
Information Distribution Center
620 E. Adams
Springfield, IL 62794-1892
(217) 785-2800 TDD (217) 785-0211
www.commerce.state.il.us

Quick Guide on How to Prepare Recyclables

For more information see DCCA's publication "Recycling 101". Many recyclers vary on which items are collected so check with your local recycling center or community's recycling coordinator.

Glass

Jars and Bottles

Rinse clean

Remove any metal caps or rings

Do not break or smash

Separate by color.

Paper

Newsprint

Stack neatly in bundles or place in paper bags.

Mixed or Scrap Paper

Box, bag or bundle. Wax or plastic-coated paper boxes cannot be recycled.

Cardboard and Paperboard

Break down flat in bundles. Gray and brown inside may be recycled, white inside may not be recycled.

Hi-grade or Ledger

Box or bundle paper and envelopes. All kinds of paper may be placed in the same container, even junk mail.

Metals

Aluminum

Rinse and flatten cans. Aluminum foil, TV trays, and pie plates can be recycled.

Steel Cans

Rinse, remove labels and flatten ends.

Plastics

Laundry Detergent, Milk, and Soda Bottles

Rinse, remove any metal caps and flatten.

Used Motor Oil

Drain carefully and seal container. Make arrangements for proper recycling or disposal before changing your oil.

Quick Facts on Recycling

Recycling aluminum can earn you money.

Recycling saves resources.

Recycling saves energy.

Recycling reduces litter.

Recycling takes little time.



You can make 20 recycled aluminum cans with the energy it takes to make one new aluminum can.

There are approximately 23 cans to each pound of aluminum.

It takes three tons of recycled newspaper to make one ton of daily newspaper.

Paper made from waste papers instead of virgin wood requires 61% less water and results in 70% fewer air pollutants.

Printer ink cartridges can be recycled.

Sixty-seven one-foot bundles of newspaper equal one ton of newspaper.

Eleven six-foot stacks of newspaper equal one ton of newspaper.

While nature can recycle a steel can in one hundred years; and an aluminum can in five hundred years, it takes a glass bottle one million years to decompose.

For additional information, contact the Solid
Waste Management Section at
217/785-8604.



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